Roger, 4/9/89

There is a considerable background to the Harwood story in the WxPost in the FBI records you gave me yesterday, to me the most intefesting part being that there is no mention of it at all. I believe this is not because the FBI suppressed it but because the FBI did not know it. This means that DJ did not consult with it.

When former Maryland U.S. Senator Charles "Mac" Mathias was the Congressman from our district we were friends. When I finished Whitewash and was having trouble getting it published I asked him to read it. He had just returned from major surgery but he found it so interesting he stayed up when he should have been asleep and read the first half that night in bed. He tried to interest others in it, ranging from Manny Celler, then House Judiciary chairman, Mac a member, to Al Friendly on the Post. Friendly assigned it to the late Larry Stern, who did nothing for so long a time I went in and asked for it. I had to drive him to his home to get it and when I looked at it he had read only a few less that the first 50 of the triple-spaced pages.

When I printed the book the next year and had a copy I went to the Post with it again and again saw Friendly and this time also Ben Bradlee. I gave Bradlee copies of some of the FBI records I then had and some I used in the book and he was, from appearance, impressed and gave the book to Dan Kurzman to read. Dan was quite excited after reading it and took me to the Post's cafeteria to tell me about it. When we returned to the reading room I was asked to prepare a few questions to be asked of DJ, as I now recall including Howard Willens. (These are reflected in the story.) I left and returned after they had returned or was there when they did. Stern went in to see Bradlee and Kurzman spoke to me, saying in essence, "Boy, you are in! They had no answers for anything."

Next thing I knew Kurzman was not on the story and Dick Harwood, then new to the Post, had replaced him. When he spoke to me he was, as I recall, antagonistic. In any event, when the story appeared they had jumped the release date on Epstein's book and featured it rather than Whitewash. I regarded this as a breach of out agreement and - am confident I was correct.

From then on the Post's attitude has been antagonistic to both our side of the controversy and to me.

I am surprised that the DJ people made no mention to the FBI of the coming appearance of criticism and in thinking of it now I think it was out of the usual for ~~from~~ DJ not to have been in touch with the FBI after the story appeared. It was across the top of page 1, above the logo, with a lengthy jump.

Willens was then a fair-haired boy to the Post as I now recall.

Kurzman was fired. I have no reason to believe it was over his attitude toward Whitewash and he was reluctant to talk to me about it before he left. I think it was in some way connected with some of his Dominican reporting but I'm not sure. Last I heard he was in New York City and with the passing of time it might be interesting to talk to him about these things. We were not good friends. We'd only just met. I was, however, quite impressed with his reporting.

And since then I've often wondered whether his departure was the real beginning of major changes in the Post's policies and positions, which did undergo a radical change.

I think they gave him some form of severance.

Harold H